

## **James A. McLaughlin to Amos Kendall, January 30, 1843, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.**

class=MsoNormal>JAMES A. MCLAUGHLIN TO AMOS KENDALL.

[January 30, 1843.]

Narrative of a trip made by Genl. Andrew Jackson in the winter of 1811 from Nashville Tenn to Natchez Miss. T .

The road from Nashville to Natchez lead through the Chickasaw and Choctaw country, had been opened by government and secured to the people of the United States by treaty with the Indians. The station of the U. S. agent for the Choctaw nation was on this road. The Genl. was going to Natchez for the purpose of getting some negroes that had become his on account of his going security for a friend, and also to bring up some 15 or 20 hands with which his nephew had been farming in the neighborhood of Natchez. On reaching the Agency he found some 7 or 8 families detained there. He inquired of them the cause. They told him they were removing to Natchez but had been stopped by the Agent until one of their number should go down to Natchez and obtain a passport from the Govr. In the meantime they were splitting rails for the Agent at 25 cents per 100, and buying corn of him at from &dollar;1.00 to &dollar;1.50 per bushel. The Genl. went with them to the Agent and there found Gabriel Moore, afterwards member of Congress, and a Mr. McVeigh, both of whom were then Representatives of Madison County in Miss. Ter. They had also been detained by the agent for the want of a passport. The Genl. inquired of him how this happened, that on a road which was by law free for every American citizen he had dared to detain people until they should get a permit and he also severely lectured Messrs Moore and McVeigh for suffering themselves to be stopped when on their way to the Legislature.

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The Agent with much severity inquired of the Genl. if he had a passport. "Yes Sir," he replied, "I always carry mine with me. I am a free born American, and the rights which under the Constitution and laws belong to me as such, I consider a sufficient passport to take me where ever my business leads me. 0211 187 He then told the emigrants to gear up their wagons and start and if any one attempted to stop them on the road for the want of a passport to shoot him down as a highway robber. He himself proceeded on. Before finishing his business information reached Natchez that the Agent had collected some 50 or 60 white men and about 100 Indians and he intended on the Genl's return to stop him by force unless he showed a permit. The Genl. was requested to procure a passport but declined, unwilling as he said to submit the American name to such an insult as to request permission to travel on the public highway. On the way he armed himself with a rifle and pistol in addition to the two pistols with which it was then the practice of all travellers to go armed. When within a few miles of the agency he was informed by a friend who had gone on before, that the agent was prepared with the force above mentioned to stop him. He sent back word that the Agent would [do] so at his peril. He placed the slaves in order, they being armed with their axes and clubs, and told them not to stop until he should order them, and if any one opposed them, to cut him down as soon as he should give the word. When he arrived at the agency the Agent asked him if he would stop. "That Sir, will depend on circumstances," he replied, "I have been informed that you intend to prevent my passing here. Now Sir I am determined to pass and if any one attempts to prevent me he shall lay low." The agent said he had no idea of such a thing and allowed him to go on. The Genl. ordered the negroes to remain on a hill by the roadside until he should join them. In the meantime the Indian chiefs, being acquainted with the General were shaking hands with him and were soon so friendly that they would have scalped the agent to please him. Without farther interruption he passed on to Nashville from whence he wrote to the President by whom the agent was immediately dismissed.

[ Indorsed: ] "James A. McLaughlin Jan. 30th 1843. Genl. Jacksons trip to Natchez, 1811."

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[ Addressed: ] To "Hon. Amos Kendall, Washington, D. C." by "James A. McLaughlin, P. M. Belleplaine Mo."